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SUBJECT: VIETNAM'S INCREASING ROLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL
-- AND MULTILATERAL COMMUNITY

11. (U) SUMMARY. VIETNAM HAS MOVED STEADILY TO INCREASE ITS PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL AND MULTILATERAL FORA SINCE THE COMMUNIST PARTY (CPV) DIRECTED THE GVN TO IMPLEMENT A MORE OUTWARD ORIENTED FOREIGN POLICY AT THE SEVENTH PARTY CONGRESS IN 1991. TODAY, VIETNAM HAS MEMBERSHIP IN 62 GLOBAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. THE GVN LEADERSHIP VIEWS THIS PARTICIPATION AS A MEANS TO ADVANCE NATIONAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND TO DIVERSIFY THE FOCI OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY.) THIS PARTICIPATION WILL LIKELY ENHANCE VIETNAM'S UNDERSTANDING OF INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND VALUES, AND ADD MOMENTUM BOTH TO THE EVOLUTION OF A MORE PROFESSIONAL -- RATHER THAN IDEOLOGICAL -- BODY OF OFFICIALS AS WELL AS TO THE ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY WITHIN VIETNAM. A LACK OF MATERIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES, INCLUDING GOOD ENGLISH SPEAKERS, HAS LIMITED VIETNAM'S PARTICIPATION AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. END SUMMARY.

THE PARTY ESTABLISHES THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

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12. (U) DURING THE SEVENTH PARTY CONGRESS IN 1991, VIETNAM'S LEADERSHIP DECLARED THAT THE TIME HAD COME TO EXPAND ITS INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS. AS STATED IN THE CONGRESS' POLITICAL REPORT, THE CPV LEADERSHIP WAS DETERMINED HENCEFORTH TO EMBARK ON A MORE OUTWARD FOREIGN POLICY, DECLARING IT WOULD COOPERATE WITH ALL COUNTRIES ON THE BASIS OF "EQUALITY AND MUTUAL BENEFITS, REGARDLESS OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL AND POLITICAL REGIMES." THE REPORT FURTHER STATED THAT VIETNAM WOULD STRIVE "TO BE FRIENDS WITH ALL COUNTRIES. . ." AND AFFIRMED VIETNAM'S SUPPORT FOR THE UN MORE DEFINITELY THAN HAD THE PREVIOUS CONGRESS. IT PLEDGED THAT VIETNAM WOULD WORK CLOSELY WITH THE UN AND COOPERATE WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES, AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGO).

13. (U) THIS POLICY MARKED A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE FROM THE SIXTH PARTY CONGRESS OF 1986, WHICH ONLY REFERRED TO

PROMOTING RELATIONSHIPS AND COOPERATION WITH SPECIFIC COUNTRIES, SUCH AS THE SOVIET UNION AND A FEW OTHER "TRADITIONAL FRIENDS." (NOTE: THE TERM "TRADITIONAL" IN THE VIETNAMESE CONTEXT REFERS TO COUNTRIES, PRIMARILY SOCIALIST, WITH WHICH VIETNAM HAD LONG-STANDING RELATIONSHIPS, SUCH AS THE THEN-USSR, LAOS, IRAQ, AND THE EASTERN EUROPE BLOC. END NOTE.)

14. (U) DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NGUYEN TAN DZUNG REAFFIRMED IN FEBRUARY 2002 THAT VIETNAM WOULD PURSUE A POLICY OF "MULTILATERALIZATION." LAST NOVEMBER, FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN DY NIEN ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE NEED FOR VIETNAM TO PROMOTE A "DIVERSE" FOREIGN POLICY AND TO INCREASE ITS ROLE IN THE "INTERNATIONAL ARENA." HE PLEDGED THAT VIETNAM WOULD UNCLASSIFIED

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CONTINUE TO HOST "IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES" AND STRIVE TOWARD WTO ACCESSION. HE NOTED THAT, DURING 2001, VIETNAM HAD ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN "MANY" UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS' ACTIVITIES.

15. (U) ACCORDING TO PHAM QUANG VINH, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DEPARTMENT (MFA/IO), TWO IMPORTANT FACTORS SPARKED THIS SEMINAL CHANGE: (1) THE END OF VIETNAM'S INVOLVEMENT IN CAMBODIA RESULTED IN THE LIFTING OF REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS AND LED TO MORE NORMAL RELATIONS BETWEEN VIETNAM AND OTHER NATIONS; (2) THE SOVIET UNION DISSOLVED BETWEEN THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH PARTY CONGRESSES, CHANGING THE DYNAMIC OF VIETNAM'S FOREIGN POLICY. WITH THE FALL OF THE SOVIET UNION, VIETNAM COULD NO LONGER BENEFIT FROM ANY CLIENT STATUS. THESE FACTORS, COMBINED WITH THE "DOI MOI" (ECONOMIC RENOVATION) POLICY ADOPTED IN 1986, INFLUENCED VIETNAM TO MOVE FROM A "RELATIVELY ISOLATED PERSPECTIVE TO ONE THAT WAS MORE OUTWARD LOOKING," VINH CONCLUDED. HE ALSO SAID THAT, AS VIETNAM EXTENDED ITS BILATERAL RELATIONS, THIS "LED TO A CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN MULTILATERAL PARTICIPATION."

16. (U) TRAN TRONG GIAP, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF ASIA, AFRICA, AND LATIN AMERICA OF THE VIETNAM UNION OF FRIENDSHIP ORGANIZATIONS, STATED SEPARATELY THAT THE SEVENTH PARTY CONGRESS "CORRECTLY REACTED TO THE CHANGING WORLD

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ENVIRONMENT." HE NOTED THAT ONCE THE CPV SET THE POLICY, STATE DIPLOMACY HAS "DONE ITS BEST" TO IMPLEMENT IT. DR. LE THI QUE, DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AT THE VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, NOTED THAT PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WAS "VERY IMPORTANT" AS A WAY FOR VIETNAM TO MAKE ITS VOICE HEARD. "IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION, NO ONE CAN AFFORD TO BE ISOLATED," HE STRESSED.

17. (U) WORLD BANK SENIOR ECONOMIST PHAM MINH DUC NOTED THAT IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, AS VIETNAM HAD BECOME MORE OPEN ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY, IT HAD BECOME MUCH MORE INTERESTED IN REACHING OUT TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. DUC SAID THAT HE HAD SEEN A CHANGE IN THE GVN'S PERCEPTION OF THE WORLD BANK FROM A STRICTLY FINANCIAL INSTITUTION TO ONE THAT ALSO PROVIDES ADVICE AND COORDINATES PROJECTS. THE GVN NOW VIEWS THE WORLD BANK MORE AS A DEVELOPMENT PARTNER AND LESS AS JUST A FINANCIER, DUC CONCLUDED.

KEY MILESTONES

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18. (U) NGO QUANG XUAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE MFA'S DEPARTMENT OF MULTILATERAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION, EMPHASIZED SEVERAL KEY MILESTONES OF THE EARLY AND MID-1990S THAT INFLUENCED VIETNAM'S INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL AND MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS: (1) VIETNAM'S JOINING ASEAN; (2) MEMBERSHIP IN THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC); (3) A FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU); AND, (4) DIPLOMATIC NORMALIZATION WITH THE UNITED STATES. ACCORDING TO XUAN, THESE EVENTS PUSHED VIETNAM (BACK) INTO THE INTERNATIONAL MAINSTREAM AND ENABLED THE COUNTRY TO EXPAND ITS PARTICIPATION IN "KEY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS." DURING THIS PERIOD, VIETNAM ALSO SERVED AS VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S 52ND SESSION. "SUCH ACTIVITY WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE SEVENTH PARTY CONGRESS POLICY CHANGES," CONCLUDED XUAN. COLONEL TRAN NHUNG, INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR OF THE "PEOPLE'S ARMY" NEWSPAPER, SUGGESTED SEPARATELY THAT JOINING THE ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION (APEC) FORUM IN 1998 WAS ANOTHER IMPORTANT EVENT THAT INCREASED VIETNAM'S PROFILE IN A MULTILATERAL FORUM.

19. (U) THE MFA/IO'S VINH ADDED THAT VIETNAM'S ELECTION TO THE UN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (UNDP) GOVERNING BOARD IN 1998 WAS ALSO SIGNIFICANT, DUE TO THE LEADING ROLE UNDP PLAYS IN THE MULTILATERAL COMMUNITY IN VIETNAM. HE ALSO NOTED THE IMPORTANCE OF VIETNAM'S ELECTION TO THE UNICEF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IN 1996, ESPECIALLY BECAUSE UNICEF'S PROGRAMS ARE IMPORTANT TO THE GVN'S OVERALL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS. DISCUSSING THE GVN'S LONG-RANGE GOAL IN THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM, VINH SAID THAT THE GVN WILL TRY FOR ELECTION TO THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL IN 2007. HOWEVER, THIS WILL BE "VERY UNCLASSIFIED

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COMPLICATED AND REQUIRE A LOT OF WORK AND PREPARATION," HE ADDED.

110. (U) ACCORDING TO DR. NGUYEN THIET SON, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR NORTH AMERICA STUDIES, DIPLOMATIC NORMALIZATION WITH THE U.S. IN 1995 GAVE GVN AND CPV LEADERSHIP MORE CONFIDENCE THAT VIETNAM COULD ASSUME A LARGER MULTILATERAL ROLE. COLONEL NHUNG STATED SEPARATELY THAT WHILE THE U.S. AND VIETNAM CONTINUE TO HAVE DISAGREEMENTS OVER VARIOUS ISSUES, ESPECIALLY HUMAN RIGHTS, THE TWO COUNTRIES COOPERATE WELL IN A NUMBER OF AREAS. AS THE LEVEL OF COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. HAS INCREASED, SO HAS VIETNAM'S INTEREST IN WORKING WITH INTERNATIONAL AND MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS, HE OBSERVED.

ASEAN: REGIONAL STAGE WITH A BILATERAL TWIST

111. (U) VIETNAM JOINED ASEAN IN JULY 1995 AS ITS SEVENTH MEMBER. ACCORDING TO PROFESSOR CARLYLE THAYER OF THE ASIA PACIFIC CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, VIETNAM MOVED RAPIDLY TO NORMALIZE ITS REGIONAL RELATIONS AFTER THE CAMBODIA ISSUE WAS RESOLVED, GIVING PRIORITY TO RELATIONS WITH ASEAN COUNTRIES AND WITH CHINA. MEMBERSHIP IN ASEAN ENHANCED VIETNAM'S DIPLOMATIC STANDING AND CREATED FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, THAYER CONTINUED.

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THAYER ALSO NOTED THAT POLICY MAKERS IN VIETNAM VIEWED MEMBERSHIP IN ASEAN AS PROVIDING SOME "COVER" FOR CERTAIN ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THE WEST, SUCH AS HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIZATION. COLONEL NHUNG OF "PEOPLE'S ARMY" NOTED THAT ASEAN HAD ALSO BEEN AN "IMPORTANT FORUM" FOR VIETNAM TO ADDRESS REGIONAL SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES. HE POINTED TO THE FEBRUARY 2002 ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN PHUKET, WHICH HAD RATIFIED A PLAN TO ASSIST VIETNAM, LAOS, BURMA, AND CAMBODIA (THE FOUR NEWEST AND LEAST DEVELOPED ASEAN MEMBERS) TO CLOSE THE "DEVELOPMENT GAP" BETWEEN THEM AND OTHER ASEAN NATIONS.

112. (U) LE LINH LAN, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN STUDIES AT THE MFA'S INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (IIR), ALSO NOTED THE POSITIVE SECURITY IMPACT OF ASEAN AND ITS IMPORTANCE TO VIETNAM. LAN POINTED TO THE 34TH ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING IN HANOI LAST JULY, WHICH REAFFIRMED THE HIGH COUNCIL'S MANDATE TO FACILITATE THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES THROUGH "REGIONAL PROCESSES."

113. (U) MFA ASEAN DEPARTMENT DEPUTY DIRECTOR TRAN DUC BINH SAID THAT VIETNAM'S INCREASINGLY PROMINENT ROLE IN ASEAN WAS
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A "SOURCE OF PRIDE" TO THE GVN LEADERSHIP. HE POINTED ESPECIALLY TO THE SIXTH ASEAN SUMMIT, 34TH ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING, AND 8TH ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM, ALL HELD IN HANOI AND ORGANIZED BY VIETNAM AS THE ASEAN CHAIRMAN. BINH SAID THAT VIETNAM WAS ALSO "VERY PLEASED" TO CO-CHAIR THE U.S.-ASEAN DIALOGUE HELD IN WASHINGTON IN NOVEMBER 2001.

114. (U) VIETNAM'S ASEAN PARTICIPATION HAS ALSO PROVIDED A PLATFORM FOR INCREASING BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS OUTSIDE THE REGION. AT THE DECEMBER 2000 EU-ASEAN BILATERAL MEETINGS, FOREIGN MINISTER NIEN HELD TALKS WITH EU COUNTERPARTS FROM FRANCE, ITALY, IRELAND, AND SPAIN IN AN EFFORT TO "ACCELERATE" ECONOMIC COOPERATION IN AREAS SUCH AS TRADE, INVESTMENT, AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY. THIS TYPE OF ACTIVITY IS IN LINE WITH THE GVN POLICY OF IMPROVING ITS BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH AS MANY COUNTRIES AS POSSIBLE.

APEC FILLS A NEED

115. (U) VIETNAM BECAME A FULL APEC MEMBER IN 1998. COLONEL NHUNG OF "PEOPLE'S ARMY" DESCRIBED VIETNAM'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ORGANIZATION AS "ACTIVE," ESPECIALLY IN THE TECHNOLOGY SECTOR. IN MARCH 2002, VIETNAM HOSTED THE 25TH APEC TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION WORKING GROUP MEETING; IN APRIL 2001, VIETNAM HOSTED THE FIRST INDUSTRIAL SERVICE AND TECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP. AT THAT MEETING, MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND ENVIRONMENT CHU TUAN NHA SAID THAT TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT IS ONE OF THE GVN'S "TOP POLICY PRIORITIES." AT THE EIGHTH APEC SUMMIT IN
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NOVEMBER 2000, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NGUYEN MANH CAM STRESSED THE NEED FOR TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION AMONG APEC MEMBERS. IN ADDITION, HE NOTED THAT APEC ACTIVITIES SHOULD HELP PREPARE VIETNAM FOR ACCESSION TO THE WTO. ACCORDING TO COLONEL NHUNG, APEC IS A GOOD MATCH FOR VIETNAM'S INTERESTS, BECAUSE VIETNAM IS ABLE TO BENEFIT FROM THE EXPERTISE OF MEMBERS WITH MORE DEVELOPED ECONOMIES, SUCH AS THE U.S., JAPAN, AND AUSTRALIA.

EU PROVIDES A MARKET, A WINDOW TO EUROPE, AND ASSISTANCE

16. (U) ANOTHER IMPORTANT MULTILATERAL ACCOMPLISHMENT DURING THE 1990S WAS THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT SIGNED BETWEEN THE EU AND VIETNAM IN JULY 1995. THIS AGREEMENT FOLLOWED OTHER EU-GVN MILESTONES, INCLUDING (1) NORMALIZATION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IN NOVEMBER 1990; AND, (2) THE TEXTILE AND CLOTHING AGREEMENTS SIGNED IN 1992 AND SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED/RENEWED SEVERAL TIMES. THESE AGREEMENTS ALLOWED VIETNAM GREATER ACCESS TO EU MARKETS. ACCORDING TO PROFESSOR BUI HUY KHOAT, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EU HAS PROVEN "VERY IMPORTANT" TO VIETNAM. HE OBSERVED THAT THE ENHANCED ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP HAD LED TO STRONGER POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH EU COUNTRIES.

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17. (U) IN ADDITION TO TRADE AND POLITICAL BENEFITS, THE GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EU ADVANCES GVN SOCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS. IN THE FIELD OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION, THE EU (ALONG WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL DONORS) SUPPORTS PROJECTS IN HEALTH AND EDUCATION, REFORESTATION, AND "POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN THE LEAST FAVORED RURAL AND MOUNTAINOUS AREAS," ALL BASIC GVN DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

18. (U) DESPITE A GENERALLY POSITIVE PICTURE, THE VIETNAM-EU RELATIONSHIP HAS EXPERIENCED A FEW BUMPS ALONG THE ROAD, PARTICULARLY CONCERNING HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY. EU COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS CHRIS PATEN EXPRESSED "CONCERN" ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN VIETNAM IN JULY 2001. THE EU FOLLOWED WITH A STRONGER STATEMENT AT THE NOVEMBER JOINT COMMISSION MEETING, EXPLICITLY CITING PROBLEMS WITH FREEDOM OF OPINION AND RELIGION, THE SITUATION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES, AND CONTINUED APPLICATION OF THE DEATH PENALTY. THE GVN RESPONDED FORCEFULLY TO THIS STATEMENT, CLAIMING IT DID "NOT REFLECT REALITY."

ECOSOC: A HIGH PROFILE MULTILATERAL PLATFORM

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19. (U) ACCORDING TO THE IIR'S LAN, SERVING AS AN ECOSOC MEMBER FOR THREE YEARS (1997-2000) PROVIDED VIETNAM WITH "AN IMPORTANT AND PRESTIGIOUS WINDOW" TO MAKE ITS VIEWS ABOUT THE UN AND DEVELOPMENT KNOWN TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. ON JULY 17, 2000, NGUYEN XUAN ANG, VIETNAM'S THEN-REPRESENTATIVE AT ECOSOC, TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT UN PROGRAMS IN VIETNAM HAD BEEN EFFECTIVE, THAT THE RESOURCES PROVIDED UNDER THOSE PROGRAMS HAD BEEN WELL USED, AND THAT THEY WILL HELP VIETNAM ACHIEVE "POVERTY ERADICATION BY 2010," ONE OF THE GVN'S PRIMARY SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS. ANG EMPHASIZED THAT VIETNAM WOULD CONTINUE TO "FULLY COOPERATE" WITH UN

PROGRAMS. IN A SPEECH AT A JULY 1999 ECOSOC HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT, THEN-DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER NIEN PRAISED THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND NOTED ITS IMPORTANCE TO ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, INCLUDING VIETNAM.

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS: TRYING TO HEAD OFF CRITICISM

120. (U) HOANG BICH LIEN, SENIOR EXPERT IN MFA/IO FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, SAID THAT VIETNAM'S ELECTION TO A THREE YEAR TERM ON THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION IN 2000 WAS AN "IMPORTANT STEP" AND PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR VIETNAM TO "SHOW" THAT IT HAS A GOOD HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD. OTHER OBSERVERS HAVE NOTED THAT ITS SEAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO VIETNAM AS A WAY TO PRE-EMPT CRITICISM OF ITS DOMESTIC HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION, HOWEVER. IN 2001, VIETNAM PARTICIPATED IN THE COMMISSION FOR THE FIRST TIME AS A FULL MEMBER. (NOTE: ACCORDING TO THE US MISSION IN GENEVA, THE GVN DELEGATION
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KEPT A "VERY LOW PROFILE" DURING COMMISSION SESSIONS. THE MISSION CHARACTERIZED VIETNAM'S PARTICIPATION AS "PASSIVE." END NOTE.)

STRONG GVN-UN DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONS

121. (U) COLONEL NHUNG NOTED THAT OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS, THE UN HAS MADE "GREAT CONTRIBUTIONS" TO VIETNAM'S DEVELOPMENT. GVN LEADERS IN GENERAL HAVE BEEN VERY PLEASED WITH UN PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, AND, FOR THE MOST PART, THE PROJECTS HAVE BEEN "FREE OF CORRUPTION," SOMETHING THAT IS NOT ALWAYS TRUE FOR BILATERAL PROJECTS, NHUNG ADDED.

122. (U) SEVERAL RESIDENT UN REPRESENTATIVES GAVE THE GVN HIGH MARKS AS A PARTNER. DR. DORIS BUDDENBERG, RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL PROGRAM (UNDCP), SAID THAT SHE HAS EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH HER GVN COUNTERPARTS AND HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY IMPRESSED WITH THE CROP SUBSTITUTION EFFORTS OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT.

123. (U) ROSAMARIA DURAND, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO) VIETNAM OFFICE, SAID SEPARATELY THAT THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO IN VIETNAM (ORGANIZATIONALLY UNDER THE MFA) LOOKS

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INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AIT-03	ACQ-00	CEA-01	CIAE-00
	COME-00	CTME-00	USNW-00	DOEE-00	ITCE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00
	DS-00	EAP-00	EB-00	ED-01	EXME-00	EUR-00	OIGO-00
	E-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00	FRB-00	HHS-01
	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	ITC-01	L-00	VCE-00
	MOFM-05	MOF-01	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01
	OPIC-01	PA-00	PC-01	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00
	SP-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TEST-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00
	EPAE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00
	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/022W				

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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5793
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY
USEU BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AIT TAIPEI 0673
ASEAN COLLECTIVE
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//FPA//
SECDEF WASHDC//ISA/ABLAGG//

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STATE FOR IO, INR, EAP/BCLTV AND EAP/RSP, L/UNA

WELL AFTER UNESCO'S INTERESTS. SHE PRAISED THE FOREIGN MINISTER FOR HAVING "STRONGLY SUPPORTED" UNESCO ACTIVITIES IN VIETNAM. AT UNESCO'S 31ST SESSION IN OCTOBER 2001, DPM PHAM GIA KHIEM EXPRESSED THE GVN'S DESIRE TO SERVE ON THE

UNESCO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. VIETNAM'S SUCCESS IN WINNING A PLACE ON THE COUNCIL SINGLED ITS DESIRE TO BE MORE ACTIVE IN THE ORGANIZATION, ACCORDING TO DURAND.

124. (U) UN POPULATION FUND (UNFPA) VIETNAM REPRESENTATIVE OMER ERTUR STATED SEPARATELY THAT, FROM UNFPA'S PERSPECTIVE, VIETNAM HAS BEEN A GOOD PARTNER FOR ITS PROJECTS. HE DESCRIBED VIETNAM AS A "MOBILIZATION" SOCIETY; ONCE THE GVN DECIDED TO TAKE A SERIOUS APPROACH TO THE POPULATION PROBLEM, THE "MASS ORGANIZATIONS TOOK OVER" AND CONVINCED THE POPULATION THAT THIS WAS THE POLICY OF THE FUTURE. IN GENERAL, HE SAID, THE GVN VIEWS UNFPA AND ITS PROGRAMS AS "VERY IMPORTANT" TO ITS OWN POLICIES.

125. (U) FORMER UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE MORTEN GIERSENG SAID BEFORE HE LEFT HIS POST IN DECEMBER 2001 THAT HE VIEWED HIS EXPERIENCE WITH THE GVN AS "VERY POSITIVE." ACCORDING TO GIERSENG, SINCE UNICEF PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED WITH SIGNIFICANT INPUT FROM THE GVN, THERE IS GENERALLY A "BUY-UNCLASSIFIED

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IN" AT THE SENIOR LEVELS AND RELATIVELY GOOD MINISTERIAL COORDINATION. HE CLAIMED THAT THE GVN HAD SEEN THE POSITIVE RESULTS OF UNICEF PROGRAMS, ESPECIALLY THE SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN TO VACCINATE CHILDREN. HE ALSO POINTED TO VIETNAM'S ACTIVE ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION, NOTING THAT VIETNAM SERVED A TERM ON UNICEF'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FROM 1996 TO 1999.

LACK OF HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES LIMITS PARTICIPATION

126. (U) THE MFA/IO'S VINH NOTED THAT, AS VIETNAM HAS BROADENED ITS ACTIVITIES WITH INTERNATIONAL AND MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS, A LACK OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL HAD LIMITED ITS EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION. FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, THE MFA DOES NOT ALWAYS HAVE ENOUGH OFFICIALS TO SEND TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES, EVEN THOSE OF INTEREST TO THE GVN. GVN EMBASSY OFFICIALS IN THOSE COUNTRIES SOMETIMES ATTEND AS OBSERVERS, BUT THE RELEVANT GVN FUNCTIONAL MINISTRY OFTEN DERIVES LITTLE BENEFIT, VINH ADDED. THE IIR'S LAN NOTED SEPARATELY THAT THE STAFFS OF THE MFA AND OTHER MINISTRIES WOULD REQUIRE MORE TRAINING FULLY TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO OPERATE IN A MULTILATERAL FORUM. RECOGNIZING THIS PROBLEM, LAN CLAIMED, VIETNAM HAD USED ITS PARTICIPATION IN APEC AS ONE WAY TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE. AT THE 9TH MEETING OF ECONOMIC LEADERS OF APEC, HELD IN SHANGHAI IN OCTOBER 2001, VIETNAM PUT FORTH AN INITIATIVE ON "TRAINING AND RETRAINING OF HUMAN RESOURCES TO ASSIST DEVELOPING MEMBERS TOWARD THE NEW ECONOMY."

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127. (U) IN ADDITION, VINH ADMITTED THAT VIETNAM SIMPLY DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT OFFICIALS WHO HAVE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ABILITY NEEDED TO PLAY RESPONSIBLE ROLES IN INTERNATIONAL AND MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS; THIS IS ALSO TRUE WITHIN ASEAN. THIS PROBLEM IS LESS ACUTE NOW THAN A FEW YEARS AGO BUT IT STILL WILL TAKE "SOME TIME" UNTIL IT IS RESOLVED, CONCLUDED VINH. COLONEL NHUNG PREDICTED THAT AS MORE VIETNAMESE STUDENTS STUDY ABROAD, THEY WILL BECOME A GOOD RESOURCE FOR BOTH GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS.

128. (U) VIETNAM ALSO FACES A CONSTANT STRUGGLE TO FIND THE BUDGETARY RESOURCES TO SUPPORT ITS PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL AND MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS, ACCORDING TO VINH. HE EXPLAINED THAT VIETNAM "IS A POOR COUNTRY" AND CANNOT AFFORD TO SET UP MISSIONS AND PARTICIPATE AS FULLY AS THE GVN WOULD LIKE. FUNDS ARE VERY LIMITED EVEN FOR SENDING DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES. VINH CONCLUDED THAT THE LACK OF HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES WILL CONTINUE TO BE A PROBLEM FOR "QUITE SOME TIME."

SINGAPORE HELPING TRAIN OFFICIALS UNDER ASEAN FRAMEWORK

129. (U) ASEAN HAS RECOGNIZED THE HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUE AMONG ITS LESS DEVELOPED MEMBERS. AT THE FOURTH ASEAN INFORMAL SUMMIT HELD IN SINGAPORE IN NOVEMBER 2000, ASEAN

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	EAP-00	EB-00	ED-01	EXME-00	EUR-00	OIGO-00	E-00
	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00	FRB-00	HHS-01	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	ITC-01	L-00	VCE-00	MOFM-05

MOF-01	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01
PA-00	PC-01	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00
SSO-00	STR-00	TEST-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00	EPAE-00
PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00

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LEADERS AGREED TO LAUNCH THE "INITIATIVE FOR ASEAN INTEGRATION" (IAI), WHICH PROVIDES A FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION "AIMED AT NARROWING THE DIVIDE WITHIN ASEAN AND ENHANCING ASEAN'S COMPETITIVENESS AS A REGION." SINGAPORE AGREED TO TAKE THE LEAD FOR THIS PROGRAM, AND IN NOVEMBER 2001 LAUNCHED THE VIETNAM-SINGAPORE TRAINING CENTER IN DOWNTOWN HANOI. (NOTE: SINGAPORE WILL SUPPORT SIMILAR CENTERS IN CAMBODIA, LAOS, AND BURMA. END NOTE.) ACCORDING TO ANDREW TENG, SINGAPORE EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY, THE CENTER WILL TRAIN VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS IN FIELDS INCLUDING TRADE, INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS, INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC LAW, POLICY ANALYSIS AND FORMULATION, TOURISM, AND ENGLISH. ALTHOUGH THE TRAINING CENTER DID NOT OFFICIALLY OPEN UNTIL NOVEMBER, 73 VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS RECEIVED TRAINING IN TRADE POLICY AND WTO ACCESSION UNDER THE IAI FRAMEWORK IN JULY AND OCTOBER, TENG NOTED. TENG SAID THAT SINGAPORE WILL COMMIT USD FIVE MILLION TO THE PROJECT OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. MOST TRAINEES WILL BE FROM THE GVN OR STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES.

COMMENT

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130. (U) VIETNAM HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS TO ASSUME A LARGER ROLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL AND MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENT, A TREND THAT IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO DEEPEN DESPITE THESE HUMAN AND MATERIAL LIMITATIONS. THIS PARTICIPATION WILL LIKELY ENHANCE VIETNAM'S UNDERSTANDING OF AND COMMITMENT TO INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND VALUES, PROVIDE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXCHANGES OF VIEWS THAT MAY SOMETIMES BE UNCOMFORTABLE FOR MORE CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE GVN, AND ADD MOMENTUM TO THE EVOLUTION OF A MORE PROFESSIONAL -- RATHER THAN IDEOLOGICAL -- BODY OF GVN OFFICIALS AS WELL AS TO THE ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY WITHIN VIETNAM.
BURGHARDT

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